

REMARKS

I. Introduction

Pursuant to the above-noted Office Action, the specification is objected to for minor informalities. Claims 31 and 33-40 are rejected under 37 CFR §1.75 For double patenting. Claims 1-31 and 33-40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Vafaie et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,082,433). Claims 41-45 are allowed, and claim 32 has been indicated as allowable subject matter if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants acknowledge and appreciate the Examiner's indication, and in response, Applicants cancel claims 31-40 and amend independent claims 1 and 18 to include the indicated allowable subject matter of claim 32. Applicants, thus, respectfully request reconsideration and allowance from the Examiner.

II. Specification Objection

The specification is objected to for minor informalities. In response, Applicants amend the specification to correct the minor informalities as suggested by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the objection of the specification be withdrawn.

III. 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) Rejection of Claims 1-31 and 33-40

A. Independent claims 1, 18, and 31

In light of the indicated allowable subject matter and to expedite prosecution, Applicants cancel claims 31-40 and amend independent claims 1 and 18 to include the indicated allowable subject matter of claim 32. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that amended independent claims 1 and 18 may be passed to allowance.

B. Dependent claims 2-17 and 19-30

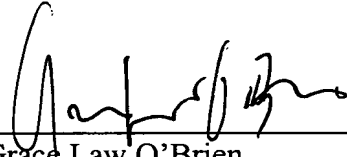
For the remaining claims, claims 2-17 and 19-30 are ultimately dependent upon amended independent claims 1 and 18, which now include the indicated allowable subject matter of claim 32. Moreover, these dependent claims introduce

additional content that, particularly when considered in context with claim 1 from which they depend, comprises additional incremental patentable subject matter. Nonetheless, Applicants reserve the right to present further arguments in the future with regard to the dependent claims in the event that their corresponding independent claims are found to be unpatentable. For all these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2-17 and 19-30 may be passed to allowance.

C. Conclusion

There being no other objections to or rejections of the claims, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-30 and 41-46 may be passed to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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